

Farm Credit Act

instead of in small loans in larger numbers." This is an attempt to control the size of the losses the corporation has experienced.

I ask the minister this afternoon to produce the tables I asked him to produce last night showing the number of loans in the various categories. It is important to get that information; but when we said more money should be provided for the small farmer he replied "We are doing it." However, the figures do not prove it. Indeed the facts and figures prove the very opposite.

The provisions of the act specify that farm property must be put forward as security, and set out the percentage that must be loaned against property. The minister also said:

Today we ask only one thing: Will this loan make it possible for this man to make more money for his family? We are not going to lend money to anybody if it is going to put him in a hole where he is always under this debt.

We now know that 55 per cent of the applications have been rejected and, according to the minister's own statement, they have been rejected because lending money to these people would only put them in the hole. What a condemnation this is of the government's agricultural policy, to say that 55 per cent of the farmers who seek loans are in such a position that if they were given the money they would be in the hole on a permanent basis.

Mr. Woolliams: He never said that.

Mr. Argue: The minister says they are helping the farmers in Nova Scotia, and the technique there is to lend money on the character of the person concerned, to lend him money on the opportunity which exists, and not on any casual assets he may have. That would be illegal.

Mr. Rapp: Make your own speech.

Mr. Argue: The minister says there is a new clause. I cannot find it in the act or in the regulations; but if they are lending money on character instead of farm land—

Mr. Bell (Saint John-Albert): You would not get much.

Mr. Argue:—how is it there are just 41 farmers in Nova Scotia out of some 12,000 who have enough character, in the words of the Minister of Agriculture, to get a loan under this legislation? The minister knows there is no provision for lending money on character. An applicant has to produce some real asset, and it is given as security on the loan he receives. I do not believe that to put this forward as a real proposition contributes very much to the proper administration of the act.

[Mr. Argue.]

The minister made quite a speech. At times it was a moving speech and one could just feel the need of farmers across the country to get something from the government. The minister was also frank. He said they were not doing a very good job in some parts of Canada and they wanted to improve it, but he added that they were doing a good job in western Canada.

He said he went out to western Canada during the election campaign and told the farmers there "Our ship has come in". He went on to say that he told the western farmers that his efforts for the next two or three years would be directed to those areas of Canada that needed to be lifted up. I agree there are areas that need to be lifted up, but the farmers in western Canada must be amazed to hear from the minister that he thinks their ship has come in and that now he will direct his detailed attention to other fields.

What happened out in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba since the election? The government had the initial price of Durum wheat reduced by \$1 a bushel on August 1, and the amount of wheat shipped from the lakehead this year from western Canada, in the navigation season to date, has totalled just 100 million bushels as compared with 168 million bushels of wheat last year. The ships may be moving but they are apparently little over half full, and the farmers in western Canada will remember that the minister thinks their ship has come in.

An hon. Member: Watch your own doesn't sink.

Mr. Argue: The minister told the farmers in Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba that they would get \$2.19 a bushel, but the price has never reached even \$2 a bushel. Can the minister explain that to them?

The Prime Minister was in his seat earlier this afternoon and I only wish he were here now. He went out to western Canada and said that if he were returned as Prime Minister he would make acreage payments permanent. There is no reference to that in the speech from the throne. The western farmers took the Prime Minister at his word, but where is the reference to \$1 an acre in the throne speech? The western farmers will not be very pleased with that kind of treatment since the election.

The Minister of Agriculture says that from now on he is going to do his work in the east. Well, he has lots to do; but what has he been doing? A few days ago he made a threat to the dairy producers and warned